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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/724,110	12/01/2003	Francesco Mulas	16159-2US PJF/rl	9926

7590 03/15/2007
Ogilvy Renault
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Montreal, QC H3A 2Y3
CANADA

EXAMINER

CHAPMAN, JEANETTE E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3635

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	03/15/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/724,110	Applicant(s) MULAS ET AL.	
	Examiner Chapman E. Jeanette	Art Unit 3635	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 4/7/04.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13, 15 and 16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 14 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>12/01/03</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

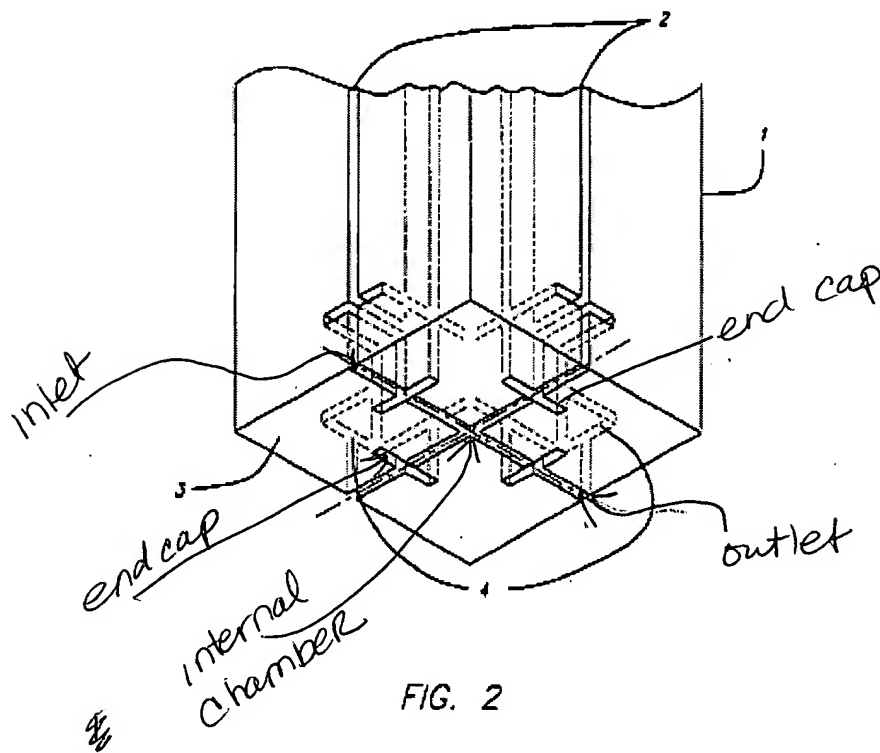
(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

Claims 1-3, 7-9, 11-12, 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Weber (6874291).

Weber discloses a modular assembly comprising:

1. a plurality of elongated modules 1 having a length; see figure 5; each having
 - a. a uniform cross section
 - b. at least one adjacent module surface 3, end side, and the elongated side
 - c. an elongated groove 2/4 extending the length of the module
 - d. the groove is disposed within the engagement surface ; see figure 3
 - e. the engagement surfaces are planar
 - f. the module has a planar load bearing surface with an elongated channel or groove 2/4
 - g. the module has a rectangular cross section

- h. the module has engagement surfaces with grooves on four sides of the rectangular cross section
- i. the channel or groove has a trapezoidal cross section
- j. a reveal module
- k. the module has at least one internal chamber defined between at least two end caps; each chamber having a fluid inlet and outlet



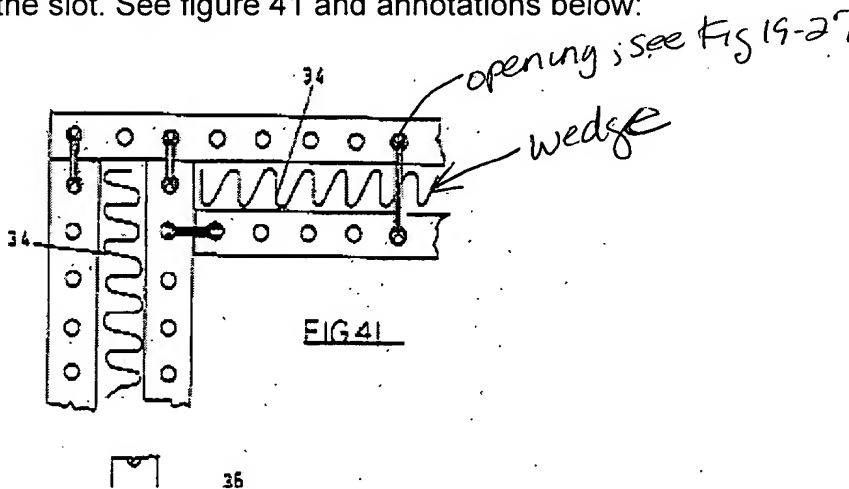
- 2. the adjacent modules are laterally linked together with at least one engagement surface of each module abutting an adjacent module
- 3. a plurality of connectors 5 mounted in the grooves 2/4 of each adjacent module and spanning there between; each connector has
 - a. two ends for sliding engagement with the grooves 2/4

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

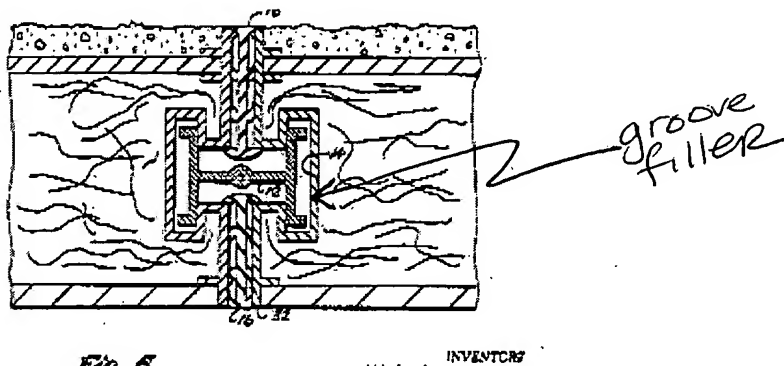
Claims 4-6, 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weber in view of Giess (4391077). Weber lacks the connector comprising a bracket with a first end adapted for sliding engagement and the second end having an opening. Giess discloses a connector for modular panels having an end for sliding engagement and another end with an opening; see figures 19-27, 41, 46, 48. The grooves of Giess includes a substantially cylindrical internal surface.. See Further, Geiss discloses that the opening includes a slot and the connector further comprises a wedge slidably engageable in the slot. See figure 41 and annotations below:



In view of the above, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to modify Weber to include a configuration for the connector that allows for more adjustment between modules.

The configuration of the groove and the connector has been considered a matter of choice and a choice lacking criticality and relevancy. Giess discloses variations and choices for these elements. One of ordinary skill of ordinary skill in the art would have appreciated the variations within the scope of his invention and selected any one capable of fulfilling the intended use function and purpose of the assembly.

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weber in view of McKee et al (3640039). Weber lacks the groove filler strip. McKee discloses a groove filler strip



In view of the above, it would have been obvious to include a groove filler strip to create a stronger connection between the modules the connector as shown by McKee.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Chapman E. Jeanette whose telephone number is 571-272-6841. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-thursday, 8:30-6:00, every fri. off.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Friedman Carl can be reached on 571-272-6842. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Jeanette Chapman
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3635
